

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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R 222318Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6242
INFO AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EIND, DR, JM, PN
SUBJECT: ASSOICATION OF AMERICAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE IN LATIN
AMERICA (AACCLA)

REF: STATE 30390

1. MESSRS. PATRICK H. HUGHSON AND KEITH L. MICELI, AACCLA
PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, RESPECTIVELY, DISCUSSED
PROSPECTS OF ESTABLISHING A CHAMBER IN PANAMA, WITH THE
AMBASSADOR MORNING MARCH 17.
2. THE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE SUPPORT
AACCLA GAVE TO PANAMA CANAL TREATIES DURING ITS TESTIMONY ON
THE HILL. HE ALSO MENTIONED THE IMPORTANT ROLE PLAYED BY
AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN IN PANAMA DURING THE RECENT CODEL VISITS
IN CONNECTION WITH THE NEW CANAL TREATY, THE IMPACT THEIR VIEWS
HAD ON THE THINKING OF THE CODEL MEMBERS. FOR INSTANCE,
SEVERAL SENATORS HAD BEEN UNAWARE THAT AMERICAN BUSINESS
COMMUNITY IN PANAMA WAS MUCH LARGER THAN THAT IN THE CANAL ZONE.
3. MESSRS. HIGHSON AND MICELI AGREED WITH THE AMBASSADOR'S
SUGGESTION "TO WAIT AND SEE UNTIL THE TREATY IS

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CONCLUDED" AND LATER ON--AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH KEY
MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY--"TO PURSUE
THE PROPOSED AMERICAN CHAMBER ESTABLISHMENT WHEN THE TIME IS
RIPE."

4. LATER IN THE AFTERNOON, COM COUNSELOR ARRANGED FOR
THE AACCLA REPS TO MEET WITH BOARD MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN

SOCIETY WHICH IS PREDOMINATED BY BUSINESSMEN. THE CONSENSUS WAS SIMILAR TO THAT EXPRESSED BY THE AMBASSADOR. MR. HUGHSON POINTED OUT THAT AACCLA'S PR PEOPLE STATIONED IN MEXICO WOULD BE PREPARED TO MAKE A PRESENTATION DURING ONE OF THE SOCIETY'S LUNCHEON GATHERINGS. HE AND MICELI APOLOGIZED FOR HAVING TO LEAVE EARLY THE FOLLOWING DAY FOR KINGSTON TO ATTEND THE INAUGURATION OF A CHAMBER THERE. (FYI-THIS TOOK THREE WEEKS, ACCORDING TO MR. HUGHSON.) MR. HUGHSON INDICATED THAT HE WOULD BE CORRESPONDING WITH PRESIDENT AMERICAN SOCIETY, WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM, WHO HAPPENED TO BE OUT OF TOWN.

6. IN CONCLUSION, THE AACCLA REPRESENTATIVES WERE HIGHLY APPRECIATIVE OF THE RECEPTION RECEIVED BY BOTH THE EMBASSY AND AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY REPS.

7. COMMENT: THE QUESTION OF FORMING A CHAMBER IN PANAMA HAS BEEN RAISED PERIODICALLY, AND CONSISTENTLY RESISTED BY THE OLD TIMERS IN THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY, WHO BELIEVED THE AMERICAN SOCIETY--ALTHOUGH ESSENTIALLY A SOCIAL ORGANIZATION--ENGAGES IN LIMITED CHAMBER ACTIVITIES SUCH AS KEEPING MEMBERS ABREAST OF PROPOSED CHANGES IN U.S. TAX LAWS AFFECTING U.S. BUSINESS ABROAD. THE AMERICAN SOCIETY, HOWEVER, IS IN THE PROCESS OF EXPANDING ITS MEMBERSHIP BY ACCEPTING MEMBERS OF THE U.S. ARMED FORCES AND WOMEN. THEREFORE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE PROSPECTS OF ORGANIZING A CHAMBER MIGHT BE IMPROVED.OF COURSE, THIS LARGELY HINGES ON THE OUTCOME OF THE NEW TREATY AND THE TYPE OF TRANSITION PERIOD THAT FOLLOWS.
JORDEN

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